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DRAWN FROM THE LIFE.

UNDER this title, perhaps it may be permitted to one who has lived long and seen much to narrate certain experiences of Life, not indeed personal, but all well authenticated, and which only do not deserve the name of romances, because they happen to be matters of Fact. The age is sceptical, and whereas at one time Legend, in course of years, was wont to be believed in as Truth, so Truth, at present, in less than a generation, is often regarded as Fiction. It is indeed probable that some of that section of my readers, which, when I belonged to it, was called 'young people,' but which would now resent such a term as an impertinence, may be inclined to question my statements, and in that case I shall be happy to furnish them with names and dates; since, whatever I shall here set down, I promise shall have actually occurred, and that within living memory, and will owe to me only its narrative form. The incidents, however, will be by no means selected on account of their strangeness, but solely by reason of their human interest; they may be terrible, or humorous, or simply curious; the only attribute common to them all will be that they are True.

THE TOLLBAR.

Upon the road of real life, there was, at one time, no object so familiar as the turnpike, although it is an institution that is passing away from many districts, and in London (save at the bridges) has altogether disappeared. According (if we remember aright) to Mr Samuel Weller, a turnpike-man was, or should have been, a misanthrope, living in solitude, and taking delight, on wet and snowy days, in seeing the passengers through his Bar disengage themselves from their warm wraps, and fumble in their pockets with numbed hands for the ticket or the money. Certainly, many toll-gates were placed in lonely spots enough, and apparently set as far from other human habitations as possible; and such a one was Alford Gate, on the Great North Road, and near the Border. It was near nothing else: placed in the centre of a bleak

and treeless moor, and visible on both sides for miles to the occupant of the box-seat as the coach came spanking along with its four bays or grays; or to the postboys, as they spurred their horses to the gallop, for the occupants of the chaise behind them were often in a hurry in that locality, it being but a stage or two from Gretna Green. Except for such swift-passing company as these, the turnpike saw few visitors; and in winter-time, even on such a highway, the traffic dwindled to small proportions, and sometimes, when the snow was deep, even ceased for a day or two, so far as wheels were concerned, altogether. But still the horn would be heard sounding cheerily over the white waste of snow, and the guard of the mail, in his scarlet coat, would go *riding* by with the letter-bags as quickly as the 'balling' snow would permit him. The coach had been obliged to stop at the wayside inn on the other side of the moor; or perhaps, even less fortunate, was, with its three remaining horses, stuck fast upon the road.

In such seasons, Alford Gate would be lonesome indeed; and the two ancient women who kept it (for there was no man) found their position anything but agreeable. They had, it is true, a good store of provisions always laid up against such occasions, and plenty of money accrued to them at the same period, for they could not go to the country-town to lodge it in the bank. This last circumstance was a source of well-founded apprehension to them. Mrs Alison, the widow of the late toll-keeper, and who had, at his decease, succeeded to 'the trust,' and her sister, Ellen Bates, were both somewhat ancient dames, and, of course, could not have defended their little mansion against the attacks of even a single robber; while their nearest protector, Jacob Wright, the blacksmith, dwelt at least two miles away across the moor. Often and often, had he and his wife, over a dish of tea at the toll-gate, sympathised with these good ladies, and done their best to comfort them after their several fashions: the wife, by acknowledging the reasonableness of their apprehension, and dwelling upon its special points of horror—the murder of both hostesses (for instance), that would probably precede

the spoliation of their dwelling—the husband, by treating their fears as chimerical, and even demonstrating to them how all risk of loss might be avoided by intrusting what money they took in the house by day to the guard of the evening-mail for deposit at Wellborough, the nearest country-town.

On a certain afternoon in early winter, when Mr and Mrs Wright were thus partaking of the hospitality of the sisters, the conversation had especially run in this particular groove; the snow, although not deep, had already fallen in sufficient quantities to keep from travelling all who were not compelled to do so by necessity; and the two poor women felt that their lonesome season had set in, and were depressed in spirits accordingly. There was a good deal of money in the old tin case, which was their strong-box, for the cold and searching winds that had lately swept the moor had kept both the good ladies from going into Wellborough, and they now bewailed this accumulation of wealth—wealth, however, which was not their own, of course, but that of the Turnpike Trust—as likely to prove their destruction. Some ill-looking fellows had slouched by the gate that very morning, and one of them, under pretence of wanting a glass of water, had made his way into their little dwelling.

‘Then, send on the money, as I have advised you fifty times before,’ quoth honest Jacob, ‘by the next coach, and then you will be easy in your mind.’

‘Ay, ay,’ said Mrs Alison in her quavering voice, ‘that is all very well, if we could persuade wicked people that this had been done. But when robbers are disappointed of booty, they are more bloodily inclined than at any other time.’

‘And, of course,’ observed Ellen Bates, ‘we had much rather lose our money—and especially the Commissioners’ money—than our lives.’

‘Yes, indeed,’ assented well-meaning Mrs Wright, ‘though it is not even losing one’s life which may be the worst of it; for did you not read in the newspaper only last winter that some men with masks broke into a lonely tollhouse, just such as this might be, and put the poor tollkeeper on the fire, and held him there, because he would not tell them where the money was; and they did not believe what was the genuine truth, that it had been sent away for safety.’

‘Gad a’ mercy, Mrs Wright, you make my flesh creep,’ shuddered Ellen Bates; ‘and I do greatly wish—only I would never leave my sister here alone—that I was going home with you and your good husband to-night.’

‘Come home with us both of you, by all means,’ exclaimed the blacksmith, with a good-humoured laugh, ‘and leave the tollbar to take care of itself.’

‘Nay, that would be a pretty thing indeed,’ said the widow, gravely shaking her head: ‘if we must be murdered, then we must—or at least I must, for Ellen of course is free to go if she chooses—but I will do my duty by my employers, let what will come of it.’

‘You’re an honest woman,’ observed the blacksmith approvingly; ‘and I hope you will never suffer for sticking to your duty.’

‘Ah, she’s a martyr to it, as I am always telling

her,’ remarked Ellen Bates. ‘The times and times she gets up in the middle of the night to put that gate open, and let folks pass; and perhaps only to take a ticket from the last gate: and then, after all, to be robbed by burglars—for that’s what’ll be the end of it all, I feel sure.’

‘And I must say I’ve got a feeling of the same sort,’ added Mrs Alison solemnly: ‘I’m not a superstitious person, but that idea has struck me of late, so as I have turned icy cold with it a dozen times.’

‘And yet you have been here a many years, ma’am,’ said the blacksmith cheerily—‘you and your poor husband as was—without being molested in any way, and far less put upon the fire yonder instead of the kettle.’

‘Me and my husband has, but not me and Ellen,’ answered the widow gloomily.—‘Ah, Mrs Wright, that’s the great blessing of a husband, believe me, and may you never come to want it: he’s such a preservative against thieves. Oh, the many, many times as I’ve roused up my poor William, and sent him all about our little house here at night to look for ‘em, which, thank Heaven, they never did come! But now—why, whenever we hears a noise—Ellen and me—we can only hide our heads under the blankets, and pray to Heaven that nothing may come of it. As for firing my poor dear William’s pistol yonder, I could not do it, even if it was loaded, which it has not been ever since his death.’

‘But I see your doors and windows are very well guarded,’ said the blacksmith, still doing his best to reassure his hostess; ‘and before any villain could make his way through so much wood and iron, there is no knowing what help may not come along the road.’

‘Ah, but it’s only our door and lower windows that are safe, Mr Wright,’ broke in Ellen Bates; ‘and any wretch has but to take the chicken-ladder from the yard, and set it up against our bedroom window, and he’s in the house in two minutes.’

‘To be sure the villain might do that,’ said the blacksmith, in the tone of one convinced against his will.

‘Well, I do pity you both,’ observed Mrs Wright, in a tone of genuine commiseration.—‘But it’s getting near dusk, Jacob, and high time for you and me to be going.—And thanks, I am sure, to you, Mrs Alison, and to you, Miss Bates, for a most cheerful and pleasant afternoon.’ For the two sisters were understood to bear the expenses of the household, and consequently of any occasion of hospitality, in equal shares.

When the bluff blacksmith and his kindly wife had taken their leave, the tenants of the little tollhouse found themselves (as well they might) more dispirited and apprehensive than ever. Their fears, indeed, grew to such a pitch as to become the very presentiments which they had hitherto perhaps only imagined them to be.

‘Something will surely happen to us this very night, Mary,’ whispered Ellen, in melodramatic accents; and ‘I shouldn’t wonder if it did, Ellen,’ was the widow’s discouraging reply. In short, the two old ladies, who had as yet no experience, as unprotected females, of a tollgate winter, were fairly panic-stricken.

It was not actually snowing; but the wind moaned with icy breath across the sheeted moor, and shook the fast-closed door and windows menacingly, as though it was going to make a

tempestuous night of it; and each sister was privately thinking how, as the night drew on, those gusts would seem as though human fingers were trying to unhinge the shutters, or unbar the door. It was quite a relief to them when, about six o'clock, they heard the cry of 'Gate,' and the sound of wheels, for they did not fear that robbers would come otherwise than on foot, and every honest face was welcome to them at such a time. What was their joy, then, to find in the present passer-by an old and trusted friend, Mark Palmer, a travelling pedler, but who in this season used a cart to carry his wares, which were of a somewhat costly nature. He threw a rug over his mare, and fastened her to the gate, while he got out to have a crack and a glass of spirits with the sisters. He was a short but resolute-looking fellow, of middle age, whose calling in those times exposed him to more danger than we have any idea of now-a-days; and he carried with him, for protection, an enormous mastiff, who remained in his cart on guard while he entered the house. He could not fail to remark the downcast appearance of the two women, who were eager enough to communicate to him the cause. 'Well, in my opinion,' observed he, when he had heard their woes, 'this alarm of yours is all moonshine. You're terrifying yourselves about nothing. Why, there's the coach at eleven; and the horse patrol at any time in the night; and you've strong doors and windows, as your friend the blacksmith has told you: while, I daresay, you have not one-tenth of the money's worth in your cash-box that I have in my cart yonder, and yet I have never been robbed yet—and don't intend to be.'

'We've more than forty pounds there,' said the widow, pointing to the cupboard, which contained this treasure, as well as her little store of tea and marmalade, 'for it was Wellborough market the day before yesterday, when scores and scores ride through the Bar, and we've not been able to cross the moor since.'

'Forty pounds is a good deal of money,' said the pedler thoughtfully; 'and affords the greater temptation because it's all in coin.'

'That is so, indeed, Mr Palmer,' pleaded Ellen Bates, clasping her hands; 'and oh, if you would be so kind, just for this one night—for it's sure to happen to-night—to stay and protect us: we've got a stall for the mare; and we could give you a nice little supper, and make you quite comfortable down in the warm kitchen here.'

'It would be a great kindness if you would,' added the widow impressively; 'for, otherwise, I feel certain we shall come to harm.'

'Pooh, pooh, Mrs Alison, you will come to nothing of the kind. I am surprised at you—who are so used to tollkeeping—being so foolishly nervous. It is out of the question that I can stop here. But I tell you what I'll do. I have only to get to Wellborough to-night, and do not apprehend any mischief between here and there; so I'll leave you my dog Towzer, to keep guard. He's as good as any constable in the world; and to-morrow—when your unlucky night has passed—I'll call for him again. But when I'm gone, just hitch the tollgate back, and don't open door or window again to-night, or the dog may run out, and be after me.'

The two sisters, overwhelmed their friend with thanks, as he strode to the door and whistled to his dog, who at once sprang into the kitchen, which seemed to shrink in its proportions at his

presence—he was such a very large dog; half mastiff and half St Bernard; with shoulders as broad as those of a prize-fighter, and hanging jaw, and terrible teeth; and with a growl that was as assuring to its master, when danger threatened, as it was depressing to his antagonist.

'There he is, ladies,' said the pedler, introducing this formidable animal to their notice; 'a dog as has not his equal in the north for courage, and who, when he lays hold of an enemy, has never yet been known to let go, except at his master's voice.—Have you, Towzer?'

Whereupon Towzer brought up from his capacious chest some canine monosyllable, that seemed to sound like 'no,' and which echoed gloomily through the little house, and died away upon the moor outside.

It was likely enough that the mastiff might be all that his master had said of him, yet his presence failed to inspire the two women with confidence, when the rumbling of the friendly wheels upon the hard road had ceased, and they were once more left without human companionship. The wind rose higher and higher, and whirled the frozen snow against the panes, as though pebbles were being thrown at them: and now it shook the doors and shutters as though it were indeed about to burst in, in visible shape, while the lesser gusts sounded like dreadful whisperings of felonious men, who made their plans in concert before attack. When the night-mail went by at a hand gallop—a mere passing vision of winged steeds and wrapped-up figures—matters became still worse, for the tenants of the little tollhouse felt that no well-disposed human creature could now be expected until morning. They retired to their bedroom on the upper floor, taking the dog with them; but they did not undress—for it seemed to their unbalanced minds a matter of certainty that the night would not pass by without some catastrophe. They lay down together on the bed and listened, while the mastiff couched upon the floor, his huge jowl half-hidden in his paws, and wholly undisturbed by the elemental strife without. Once only, when a pane of glass—which, however, they knew had been previously loosened—fell with a crash on the kitchen-floor below, he raised his monstrous head and muttered thunder. Two candles were kept burning, and well lit up the little room. It was about one o'clock that a short lull took place in the tempest, and Mrs Alison distinctly heard the sound of footsteps in the back-yard. Her sister, who had fallen asleep for a few moments, in spite of herself, had not heard the noise, and as usual in such cases, affirmed she had been broad awake, and must have been conscious of the incident, had it occurred. The widow did not waste words in argument, but whispered, in trembling accents: 'Look at the dog.' It was evident enough that Towzer had heard something which required an explanation, for he opened his great eyes, and lifted his ears, although remaining otherwise unmoved. 'They have gone to get the chicken-ladder,' continued the widow in tones of calm despair: 'that is what I always said they would do.' And indeed, in a few minutes, there was a dull thud against the window-sill without, such as would be produced by placing the ends of a ladder upon it. It was not a dark night when the swift-flying clouds permitted, as now, the moon to shew herself; yet neither of the women dared look through the pane. They kept their

eyes fixed on the dog, in whom their sole hope now rested. The appearance of that magnificent creature was indeed (if they had been in a condition to appreciate it artistically) almost sublime. He had risen in an instant, but without sound, and placed himself close under the threatened spot—the window; every hair in his body appeared alive with excitement; his eyes grew bloodshot, and wore an expression of concentrated fury; but his teeth remained, as yet, in their sheaths, except their white points, which shewed under the wrinkled upper lip.

The heavy shuffling step of some man upon the rounds of the ladder could now be heard—the fall of the knee as well as that of the foot, because the ladder was boarded—and then a hand was placed upon the fragile fastening of the casement.

Then, for the first time, the dog gave audible token of his presence: a hoarse and terrible menace broke from his now open jaws. It was not a growl, and still less like a bark. The man without evidently heard it, for the noise at the window ceased, but he did not seem to recognise it as the thing it was.

‘He is sure to have pistols, and will shoot the dog,’ whispered Ellen Bates through chattering teeth. She was a lady who always ‘speculated for the Fall.’

The widow did not speak, and perhaps could not. She fancied she could hear the very breathing of the man without. After a short pause, the window was slowly lifted to its full height, and a man, whose features were concealed by a piece of black crape, pushed his head and shoulders into the room. The next moment, he uttered a shrill cry of terror, as the huge mastiff sprang at his throat, before he could put up his hands to save it, and bore him headlong to the floor. To see him battling with so terrible a foe, at such a disadvantage, his body half without and half within the room, would, under any other circumstances, have aroused the good women’s compassion, but horror and alarm so wholly possessed them that they had no room for pity. They fled from the room, and out of the house, passing close beside the ladder, on the top of which so frightful a combat was proceeding, and dashed across the moor towards the blacksmith’s house. The horrid growlings of the dog and the shrieks of the man which filled their ears before they could undo the fastenings of the door, seemed to pursue them across the Waste.

Bareheaded and uncloaked as they were, they heeded not the bitter wind, nor were they conscious of fatigue, nor did they spend the precious breath in speech, but pushed on at their utmost speed. To their great joy, as they drew near the cottage, they beheld a light at the upper window, and congratulated themselves that they would be let in at once, and find shelter and protection from that friendly household. They beat frantically at the door; and presently a quavering voice, through the keyhole, demanded who they were, and what was wanted. They hardly recognised the voice of the blacksmith’s wife, and she, on her part, had never heard the accents of her friends so shrill and piteous. The fact was that her Goodman was out, and she was almost as frightened at such an unseasonable visit as they were themselves. Then the widow and her sister remembered for the first time how honest Jacob had told them in the afternoon that he should have business in Wellborough

that evening; but neither they nor Mrs Wright had had any idea that it would delay him so late, and the fact now seemed deplorable enough to all of them. ‘They’ve beguiled him to drink at the public-house,’ cried Mrs Wright, in injured tones, ‘until he thought he might just as well stay where he was till morning; and it ain’t the first time, nor yet the second, Mrs Alison. And I am right glad of this—that what has happened to-night (for the fugitives had told their tale) will be a lesson to him not to leave me lonesome here again as long as he lives.’ To this sanguine view of man’s reformation, it is probable that, under less thrilling circumstances, the experienced widow might have taken exception; but she could think and speak of nothing now save that which she had so lately ‘gone through,’ and the horrible scene that was perhaps even still being enacted at the tollhouse.

‘Nay, but if the dog be anything of a mastiff,’ reasoned Mrs Wright, whose father had chanced to be connected with the canine ‘fancy,’ and who therefore was an authority in the matter, ‘he has either killed the man by this time, or the man has killed him, and made off with the toll-money. Unless he shot him, bless you, or could have got at him to cut his throat, you may depend on’t he’s a dead man.’

‘Dearey me, I wonder how it has turned out!’ ejaculated Ellen Bates.

‘I wonder too!’ echoed the widow. ‘If, as you say, there can now be no danger, Mrs Wright—’

‘Lord a’ mercy! you ain’t thinking of going back again?’ interrupted Ellen.

‘I will go, if Mrs Wright will go,’ answered the widow resolutely; ‘that is, when the daylight comes.’

And rather than be left alone, Ellen Bates agreed to accompany the other two.

Accordingly, at the first gray streaks of dawn, the three women, though with beating hearts, crossed the moor to the tollhouse, against the upper window of which the ladder was still reared. With fearful steps, they ventured into the kitchen, where all things seemed undisturbed, and were about to go up-stairs, concluding that both dog and man had fled, when Ellen Bates pointed to the ceiling, on the white surface of which appeared a huge red stain, which had evidently soaked through from the floor above. At the same moment, a noise from the same direction seemed to freeze their blood. It was the sound of some heavy body being dragged over the boards, accompanied by a low and savage growling.

‘The dog has killed the wretched man, and is worrying the body,’ said Mrs Wright in a hoarse whisper: ‘it is just what they do with vermin.’

‘This is too horrible!’ ejaculated the widow, with her foot on the stairs. ‘The mastiff will not hurt me, and, at all events, I will do my best to stop it.’

It was in vain that the others tried to dissuade her. She overcame her terrors sufficiently to enable her to reach the open chamber-door, where a frightful spectacle presented itself. The burglar, a large and powerfully built man, was on the floor, quite dead; while the mastiff, with his teeth still fast in the throat of his foe, and growling savagely, was dragging the mangled corpse hither and thither over the floor. The body of the dog was interposed between his victim, so that his face, from which the black crape had been torn, was at first invisible, but the next movement of the animal

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revealed it. As it did so, a terrible shriek burst from the lips of Mrs Wright, who had followed close upon the widow's footsteps, and she fell heavily upon the floor in a swoon; for the would-be thief that lay dead before her was no other than her own husband, the Blacksmith!

THE DOMESTICATION OF THE OSTRICH.

THE late M. Isidore Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, in his remarkable work, *The Acclimatisation and Domestication of Useful Animals*, mentions the ostrich, the nandow, the cassowary, the emeu, as deserving of attention, on account of their excellent flesh, their enormous eggs, and their valuable feathers. Because of their alimentary qualities, he applies to them the new term of butcher-meat birds. The resemblance of the ostrich to the ruminating quadrupeds was observed by the ancients. Aristotle asserted that it was partly bird and partly quadruped, and Pliny thought that it might almost be regarded as belonging to the class of beasts.

Though the ostrich and the cassowary be natives of warm climates, their acclimatisation presents no peculiar difficulties; and that the nandow and the emeu can reproduce in Europe has been demonstrated. The emeu has bred in France, Belgium, England, and elsewhere, and exhibited an extraordinary power of resisting cold. At Paris, one lived for several years in the open air, refusing the shelter provided for it, and sleeping in winter half-covered with snow, protected by its impenetrable fleece of feathers. Its flesh, according to M. Florent Prévost, may be compared to that of the ox, and would be valuable as butcher-meat, seeing that the thigh of an emeu may weigh more than twenty-two pounds; the flesh of a young one, of from fifteen to eighteen months, when it is full grown, is highly esteemed, the taste being something intermediate between that of turkey and pork. Its eggs, one of which is equal to a dozen hen-eggs, are very delicate, and of an exquisite flavour. Its skin, covered with abundance of down, serves for the making of valuable carpets, and its pliant and graceful plumes are used for ornament. A further idea of the value of this bird will be formed, when we add that for its domestication the Imperial Acclimatisation Society has offered a medal of fifteen hundred francs. There is a special reason why persevering attempts should be made in order that it may be domesticated in Europe: it is one of the five species of wingless birds still existing, but destined to speedy extinction, unless efforts be made to introduce them into countries to which they are not natives.

While the acclimatisation of a bird so hardy as the emeu seemed to present no serious obstacles, that of the ostrich was hardly to be expected without long delay and much pains; and yet this apparently hopeless experiment is already so far advanced as to justify the belief that ere long the ostrich will be domesticated in Europe. It has been much promoted by the zeal of two members of the Imperial Society of Acclimatisation—M. Gosse, a learned physician and physiologist at

Geneva; and M. Chagot, a Parisian merchant. The latter gentleman, observing that the ostrich was becoming scarce, and being desirous to prevent the extermination of a bird whose feathers are an important branch of commerce, generously founded a prize of two thousand francs for the multiplication and domestication of the ostrich in France, Algeria, or Senegal.

Unsuccessful attempts at ostrich-rearing have been made both at Marseille and Paris; but better fortune has marked those at Florence and Algiers. In 1857, M. Hardy of Algiers was on the point of succeeding in his experiment: a pair of ostriches began to sit upon their eggs, but soon forsook them, in consequence of the nest being drenched with rain. To prevent the recurrence of such an accident, he raised a hillock of sand where the nest had been, in the hope that a second deposit of eggs would be made in it. About the middle of May, a new nest was scraped in the top of the hillock; in the end of June, the birds began to sit a few hours daily; on the 2d July, they took to sitting with greater regularity; and on 2d September, a young one (a female) was seen walking about. This was the first authentic instance of an ostrich born in captivity. It thrived so well, that when ten months old it was as big as its parents.

In 1858, the same pair of birds hatched nine out of twelve eggs; and, during subsequent years, M. Hardy was equally fortunate in rearing young ostriches from others in his possession. In ten years (1857 to 1867), forty-two couples laid 875 eggs, and hatched 162 young ones, of which, at the end of three months, 103 survived. M. Hardy gives interesting details of the profit on his flock of twenty-one adult male and female ostriches in 1866. The total was 5918 francs, 20 cents; or 281 francs, 80 cents per head. These birds consume daily five hundred grammes of barley and grass, and, failing this, *opuntia* cut into pieces. This food, including attendance, does not exceed twenty cents each per day, or seventy-three francs a year. The feathers furnish the greater part of the profit: they are sold by public auction, and according to weight. Fifty wing-feathers, selected for the Universal Exhibition, were valued at 199 francs, 50 cents. When ostriches are so abundant as to be sold in the meat-market, there will, of course, be a new item of profit from the sale of the flesh.

The acclimatisation of the ostrich has been prosecuted with like success in the Zoological Garden of San Donato at Florence, at the instance of Prince Demidoff. From the interesting account which the prince has given of two hatchings, we learn that the first incubation was conducted solely by the male; the female only coming near the eggs when he retired to eat, and turning them over carefully, after which she retired. The second hatching was carried on by the male and the female in turn, the greater part of the toil, however, being left to him. On one occasion, during a torrent of rain, when one could not have preserved the nest, they both sat on it. The second hatching also exhibited this

pleasing feature, indicative of domestication—the birds were tamer, and permitted the approach of strangers.

On account of its comparatively high northern latitude, 45 degrees, its height above the sea, 645 feet, and its average temperature, 53 degrees Fahrenheit, Grenoble must be regarded as furnishing the most interesting instance of ostrich-rearing. In April 1864, in the Acclimatisation Garden of the Zoological Society of the Alps, a male ostrich had scraped out a hole a foot and a half deep, and more than three feet broad, for the reception of the eggs, whose coming his instinct had taught him to expect. The laying began in May; two eggs being produced at an interval of six days, but both were broken and eaten by the female. A second laying commenced 15th May, and proceeded regularly, at an interval of two days, up to 6th June, when she had produced eleven well-formed eggs. A third laying produced only two small and deformed eggs, which was an evidence that the laying was over. The laying took place with remarkable regularity every second day, at three o'clock afternoon, without a variation of ten minutes before or after. From 25th May, the male wished to hatch, and sometimes sat on the eggs; but after 30th May, he only left the nest in order to allow the female to lay. After the last egg was laid, the female sat on the eggs for a few minutes in the middle of the day; but the male always sat at least twenty hours a day.

This curious incubation proceeded thus. Every morning at seven o'clock the ostriches were turned out of their enclosed lodge, in order to have a gambol before breakfast, which generally consisted of bread, barley, and grass. The repast being terminated, at the order of the woman in charge of them, they returned to the nest, from which they were not to stir for the next twenty-four hours. They were as easily managed as Cochins fowls, and never once rebelled.

Of the eleven eggs, two were broken before incubation commenced. On the forty-fourth day after regular sitting began, a young one was seen at the edge of the nest. Impatient to see what the nest contained, M. Bouteille obliged the ostriches to leave it. It had two young ones not yet free of the shell. Of the seven remaining eggs, three were ascertained to be barren, and taken away, and four doubtful were left. As soon as permitted, the male resumed his place on the nest, as if it had not been touched. At the end of four days, the eggs were broken, and found to contain embryos dead at different ages.

The day after they were born, the young ones slipped from below the male, and began to peck sand as well as a paste of hard eggs, bread, and lettuce, which was prepared for their parents, so that there was no anxiety as to what to feed them on. At first, these young ostriches were about the size of a female wild-duck, which they also resembled in form; but in a fortnight, they had nearly doubled in size, and accompanied their parents everywhere, pecking at the sand, and running under their legs when they heard them eating. The female, which paid such little heed to her eggs, was a most anxious mother, keeping her young ones constantly in sight, and instantly running to them in answer to their call, which resembles that of a young turkey when frightened.

These semi-domesticated ostriches therefore do not deserve to be charged with lack of natural

affection, an accusation which Old Testament writers prefer against the ostrich of the wilderness; neither are they so stupid as that is said to be. They were shy, but as capable of becoming attached as most of our domesticated animals: thus, at Grenoble, the woman who had charge of them took the young ones into her arms without the parents shewing displeasure, whereas, at the sight of a strange man or animal, they got into a fury.

M. Bouteille thus concludes his account of them: 'I believe this experiment of importance, because of its practical interest. It is, in fact, a hatching and rearing in a courtyard which I have been describing, and in this respect it is new; and I do not believe that such a result has been obtained in any latitude so far north as ours.'

The same gentleman relates the continuation of the experiment up to 1867, and from his account we gather the following particulars.

In 1865, ostrich-rearing at Grenoble up to the tenth month was successful; but then three young ones, as big as their parents, died, in consequence of a singular accident, the cause and the remedy of which are alike unknown. Frightful fractures and dislocations occurred even when the animals were not in violent motion; in one instance, while a workman was at hand, and heard not the slightest noise. Thinking that this extreme fragility of bone might be due to want of calcareous material in their food, that was supplied, but not in time to prevent the last accident. This fragility has likewise been noticed at Madrid, but apparently not to the same extent.

But though these experiments be not all *couleur de rose*, M. Bouteille thinks there is no reason to be discouraged. 'I have,' he observes, 'now become convinced that the reproduction of the domesticated ostrich is a completely settled fact; this domestication is not only interesting to science, but also to those who occupy themselves in finding out new alimentary and industrial resources. M. Saint-Hilaire thought that the ostrich might become a butcher-meat bird. Our too frequent accidents have enabled us to know this from experience. The flesh of the ostrich is abundant, substantial, well tasted, and something like the flavour of the hare. It may be prepared like that of the ox or the hare, stewed or jugged; as a roast, which is the test of good meats, it leaves nothing to be desired. All of the many who have eaten it at Grenoble found it excellent. The flesh of the ostrich is not the only edible product of the animal; the three layings in 1866, gave us 45 eggs, weighing in all 154 pounds. Prepared in different ways, they have always been found very good. An ostrich-egg on a dish looks very appetising, from the whiteness of its albumen, in the middle of which the yolk shines like an eye of the brightest yellow. As an omelet, this egg in no respect differs from that of a fowl, but its yellow is incomparable for the preparation of creams.

'After the alimentary products come the feathers, which are not less important. The plumes of our adult ostriches, after moult, were sold for 300 francs (L.11, 18s. 1d.). I shall end this letter with some figures which, I hope, will prove that the rearing of the ostrich may be profitable, even in France. In our enclosure where the animals are liberally fed, the annual cost of food is from 80 to 90 francs each. Taking 1866, which was the least productive of the three years of our experiment, the plumes produced 300 francs, and the 45 eggs

180 francs, which is a low price, as the shells alone sell for 3 francs each. From this gain of 480 francs, deducting 200 francs for food and keep, we have a gain of 280 francs (L.11, 2s. 3d.) on two adult ostriches. But taking the average of three years, and reckoning the young ones sold, the profit amounts to 560 francs (L.22, 4s. 6d.).

These details of the profits of ostrich-rearing, even under the disadvantage of a European climate, are sufficient to excite attention. No notice is taken of the industrial value of this huge bird: as it can carry a man with more than the speed of a swift horse, we do not see why, in 'the good time coming,' the people of sundry localities should not have their letters conveyed by ostrich-post; or why a morning ride on the bird should not be the means of acquiring an appetite big enough to make a sensible impression on an omelet à l'austruche of the respectable weight of some three or four pounds.

But while such results are possible in Europe, they are likely to be exceeded in Africa, the native country of the ostrich. We shall therefore conclude this notice with a brief allusion to its domestication at the Cape of Good Hope.

If the attempts of the French in Algiers to prosecute ostrich-rearing merit attention, we are more specially concerned to know how similar experiments succeed in the southern extremity of the African continent, in our colony at the Cape. Our information is derived from a communication of M. Héritte, French consul at Cape Town.

Although only of recent introduction among a few of the agriculturists at the Cape, the domestication of the ostrich is so zealously prosecuted, that there is a considerable flock of this bird. At the age of from six to eight months, the young ones are left at liberty night and day. They provide for themselves, and only get, now and then, a small quantity of maize, or other food, in order to attach them to the place where they are reared, as without this they would become very wild. They are very fond of the prickly pear, and of the seed of the aloe when the leaves have fallen. The young ones are fed on leaves, cut small, all kinds of vegetables, carrots, lettuce, thistle, and the prickly shrub, *Dubbeljes doorn*. When three days old, they get, besides these plants and vegetables, a little maize or barley. They are kept warm at night on straw, hay, or wool, in a warm room—a kitchen, for instance—are never permitted to go out till the sun is up, and are supplied with food during the whole day.

The ostriches are chiefly valued for their feathers, which are not plucked till they are eighteen months old, and during the months of August and September, corresponding to our February and March. The best ostrich-feathers of commerce come from birds living in the most arid and sandy regions, where there are few prickly shrubs capable of injuring the plumes. The depreciation of those taken from the domesticated animal is reckoned at thirty per cent.; nevertheless, the feathers of tame ostriches are of such value as to claim attention. Last year, one person received in London L.98, 14s. 2d. for the feathers of eighteen young ostriches, though in bad condition, having, from want of experience, been plucked at an improper season.

An ostrich-egg is deemed equal to twenty-four hen-eggs, and keeps long, owing to the thickness of the shell. At the Cape, ostrich-eggs are much

used in the making of very good and economical cakes.

When we add that, at the Cape, ostrich-rearing is believed to be almost as profitable as keeping merino sheep, we have said enough to demonstrate that this is a species of industry which may be advantageously prosecuted in many portions of the globe, including not a few British possessions.

THE BASTILLE

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

THE idea commonly entertained of the Bastille is that within its precincts it combined all the horrors of our Tower, the Star Chamber, and Newgate; with the additional aggravation, that its dungeons were crowded, and that the greater number of the prisoners were innocent victims of arbitrary power, exercised at the instigation of private individuals, for the gratification of their malice. In short, the word was understood by a past generation to imply all that was odious and horrible in connection with prisons; and when the opposition to the erection of union workhouses was agitating the land from end to end, it was thought that everything evil that could be said of them was comprised in the denomination 'Poor-law Bastilles.'

An examination of the records concerning the Bastille preserved in the French archives shews that this impression, though not far from the truth, was greatly exaggerated in regard to the number of persons who were imprisoned in it.

Previous to the Revolution, the populace had as little reason to care what passed within its walls as the people of London had in what was done in the Tower, when it too was a state prison. The prison the Parisians had more cause to abhor was the Bicêtre, being that in which the commonalty were shut up; and we gather that this was really the case. What the Bastille really was, and the reason why all the proceedings that took place in it were surrounded with such deep mystery, can now be ascertained from the investigations of M. Ravaisson, who has spent a lifetime among the dusty records of past centuries in investigating the history of this fortress.

Most of the dramatic stories that are still current in every European language were manufactured immediately after the taking of the Bastille, and nothing is more easy to conceive than that the more highly coloured these narratives were the better the chance of the book obtaining a large sale; hence the pathetic tales of Pellisson's spider, crushed by the foot of the brutal jailer, according to Delille; the cat of which Madame de Staël wrote; and the rat tamed by the younger Crébillon, who, if he deserved his imprisonment for no other cause, deserved it on account of his writings. As to the discovery of iron cages, of skeletons, and many other horrors, they for the most part existed only in the imaginations of the narrators; and as regards the human remains found on the demolition of the building, and which gave matter for so much sensational writing at the time, it is now shewn that they were in the part of the building

occupied by the surgeon; there is nothing to prove that they were the bodies of prisoners, and that they had not died from natural causes. So far as this matter is concerned, it was settled by the declaration signed by three competent persons appointed to inquire into it, which was published in the *Moniteur* of the 5th May 1790. The same holds good with respect to the assertions of the discovery of a scaffold, of instruments of torture, and of a torture-chamber in one of the towers where the 'question' was administered. It is now found that no authentic evidence exists of the prisoners in the Bastille having been subjected to the brutal tortures that were undoubtedly administered elsewhere. The 'simple question,' by water and the boot, was occasionally employed, and these were bad enough; but we do not find proof anywhere that we can implicitly rely upon of any individual having been punished in this way, except in the case of a Protestant preacher named Langlois, whose case, as far back as the close of the reign of Louis XIV., is detailed in a work entitled *Two Years' Mission at St Petersburg*, by Count Ferrière Perey.

The first and primary motive for building the Bastille was the defence of Paris. The first stone was laid on the 22d April 1367, and the original design was for a gateway, similar to many that might formerly have been seen in many places in England, and especially on the coast, where some of them still remain in very good condition, notwithstanding the time that has elapsed since they were built. The two towers which composed this gateway were exceedingly strong, and so also were the walls erected to connect these towers with two others built subsequently. Surrounding these towers was a moat twenty-five feet in depth, which at first was considered a sufficient defence against a surprise; but in a few years afterwards, when the dungeons contained in the fortress had become the receptacle for prisoners of mark, this fosse was bordered by citadels, outside of which another ditch was dug, beyond which was the boulevard, and beyond that again another deep excavation; on the completion of which, together with the fortress of Vincennes, Paris was not only well protected against enemies without, but the inhabitants themselves were under the domination of the huge edifices, which thus served to quell the turbulence of those who had previously given the ruling sovereign so much disquietude and humiliation. Within the succeeding two hundred years, it was still further enlarged, until it comprised eight towers; but from 1660 down to the time of its destruction, no change was made in its dimensions.

When civil war in France was at an end, and Paris was no longer in danger from sudden onslaughts, the Bastille was devoted entirely to the purpose of a state prison: the regulations were drawn up which fixed the mode of procedure, and which were adhered to with such unvarying tenacity as added not a little to the dread its very name inspired among that class who were liable to be immured in its dungeons.

The first link in the chain of proceedings was the *lettre-de-cachet*, which was signed by the king's own hand, and countersigned by the minister of

Paris; and after the arrest of the individual specified in it, it was endorsed by the governor of the Bastille, and added to the records of the institution. Curiously enough, the privilege, as it was considered, was occasionally granted to the person named in the *lettre-de-cachet* to carry it with his own hand to the governor; but the usual course was to transmit it to the lieutenant-general of police, who nominated the officers on whom the duty was devolved of actually performing the arrest, their grade varying according to the rank of the prisoner. When arrested, the criminal was placed in a carriage, the principal officer concerned in his arrest taking his place by his side. On arriving at the precincts of the prison, the carriage stopped at the entrance of what had very much the appearance of a blind alley. The sentinel stationed at this point challenged the party, and on receiving a satisfactory reply, he raised the bayonet he had lowered to bar their advance, which was the signal to the cavalcade to proceed past the half-dozen shops, the barracks, and stables to a gate situated at the end of a drawbridge, usually kept raised. The rattling of the chains which accompanied the lowering of this bridge must have driven the blood from many a cheek which would not have paled on a battle-field. As soon as it had been lowered to its place, the prisoner and those who accompanied him descended, and proceeded on foot to a second drawbridge, situated before the great gate of the fortress. This obstacle passed, the party arrived at a last drawbridge, also defended by a guard of soldiers, one of whom constantly paraded backward and forward between two portcullises or gates, which formed a kind of cage. Passing through these, the prisoner and his guard found themselves in a large open space, where the inferior class of prisoners were permitted to take exercise.

Facing the entrance was a massive tower, flanked by two courts, and divided as to the basement by a passage, of which a fair idea may be formed by the passage which runs through the Horse Guards' building in Whitehall, only that it was narrower and even more gloomy than that dungeon-like tunnel. The windows of this tower, as we must call them in default of any other name, were mere slits in the wall. The ground floor contained the kitchens and other domestic offices, and above these were apartments usually occupied by prisoners of no importance; though they were not always so occupied, for the Cardinal de Rohan, the same who was mixed up in the mysterious affair of the queen's necklace, was confined therein. On the second floor lived the king's lieutenant, whose principal occupation was the watchful observation of the two courts above mentioned. The remainder of the repulsive-looking edifice was devoted to apartments in which were stored the records, and the property the prisoners happened to have about them when brought in; those in which they underwent examination; and others connected with the performance of the duties of the law officers. Indeed, the work done within its walls was in keeping with the dismal effect produced by the first sight of it on the minds of those who passed through the gates; the only relief to the otherwise blank aspect of the structure being the clock, though even this was surrounded by emblems not by any means calculated to lessen the sinister appearance of the tower itself, being supported by two figures loaded with chains, beneath which were the rings which assisted in supporting the

scaffold on which the Marshal de Biron was executed.

It may easily be imagined that the unfortunate—whose arrival was announced by the doleful sound of a deep-toned bell—did not require many seconds to notice the peculiar features of this dreaded prison. The procession to the gate was swelled by the governor himself, or the major, followed by a body of jailers, according to the rank of the criminal. The only sounds heard as this procession moved along were the jingling of the keys and arms. Everything was done according to system; the march was slow and solemn, as though it were attending a funeral. Before the gate was opened, an inspection was made of the new occupant, whose personal appearance was carefully compared with the description that had been given to the king's lieutenant. Then the receipt for the delivery was signed; the few questions that had to be put having been asked in a low voice, the whole party proceeded to the residence of the governor. Here the prisoner had to enter his name in a register. If he was a man of rank, the king's lieutenant himself despoiled him of everything he had in his pockets or about his person; an operation that was performed with far less gentleness by a sergeant or a jailer in the case of prisoners of an inferior grade. The articles of which the prisoners were relieved were, together with their clothes and papers, if they happened to have any, entered in a book with the most scrupulous minuteness, and deposited in the store devoted to their reception; unless the prisoner was to undergo an immediate examination, in which case they were provisionally placed in a box, which was then fastened and sealed. Three times in the course of his life did the Duke de Richelieu endure this process, and another prisoner, Lenglet-Dufresnoy, no less than six times. When this formality had been completed, the prisoner was led away to the apartment to which he was assigned. To some favoured individuals, rooms in the governor's residence, or on the first stories of the towers, were assigned; to the least favoured, a dungeon.

The total number of chambers for the reception of prisoners was forty-two—thirty-seven in the towers, and the rest in the walls that connected them with each other. In the foundation of the towers were the dungeons, and of a most horrible description these were. Wet, dark, and foul, the only opening for the admission of light and air being a narrow slit in the immensely thick walls opening on the ditch, and tenanted by crowds of rats, the miserable wretch who was doomed to confinement in one of these having to fight incessantly for his life with the hungry and ferocious creatures about him. The records of the Bastille contain several petitions from the prisoners confined in these dreary dungeons. Between these latter horrible abodes and the apartments in which the great state prisoners like Richelieu were confined, there were others of an intermediate character, in which the prisoners were exposed to the rigours of the cold in winter, and the heat of summer endured under circumstances which made it almost suffocating.

So far from a large number of prisoners having been found in the Bastille when it was captured, a careful inquiry proved that only seven were found, and of these there were some who, like those confined in Newgate, as spoken of by Dickens in his

account of the breaking open of that prison, had become so habituated to their quarters, that they complained of being disturbed by their liberators; the smallness of the number considerably staggering the insurgents, who expected to find hundreds rotting in dungeons, and who consequently began to doubt whether their liberation had not been procured somewhat dearly at the price of eighty dead and seventy-three wounded. In fact, only seven or eight chambers were found furnished. A document has indeed been discovered, signed by M. Breteuil, ordering that eighteen others should be prepared, but there was nothing to prove that this order was carried into effect; yet this absence of proof does not of course establish that the number of persons imprisoned in the Bastille did not exceed the number indicated by the small number of apartments provided, as a bundle of straw or a mattress could as easily have been thrown down as removed, without leaving traces of the chamber having been used.

Other evidence, however, exists on this point, that of Linguet, for example, who says that according to the agreement between the government and the governor of the prison, the former were bound to pay him for provisioning fifteen prisoners, even when there were not so many under his charge; the amount he received being about eight shillings a day of English money. It certainly was not out of this allowance that the governor made the large fortune he usually accumulated during his tenure of office, a fortune very hardly earned, seeing that he was never permitted to leave his post. The source whence he derived this was from prisoners who were able to pay for indulgences in the matter of lodging and treatment, and from supplying them with provisions, which was sanctioned by the regulations, that fixed the tariff at one hundred sous for inferior prisoners, ten livres for the clergy and those of the middle class, fifteen livres for members of the parliament, and from twenty-four to thirty-six livres a day for a lieutenant-general or a field-marshal. Besides, a register found when the prison was taken shewed that in the course of forty-six years only two thousand prisoners were received, giving an average of forty-four a year; and even half this number must have been badly accommodated, for notwithstanding the space occupied by the prison, the walls were extremely thick, and the two courts along which the cells were ranged were very small, the largest being but one hundred and two feet in length by seventy-two in breadth, and the lesser seventy-two in length by forty-two in width. From these cells the prisoners could see but a small patch of sky about the size of a blanket, and it must have been seldom that a current of fresh air made its way into the interior. The hardship of an imprisonment in such dens was somewhat mitigated, in the case of most of the prisoners, by the permission to take exercise in the courts. Comparatively fortunate was the man among them who was lodged in one of the chambers about midway between the basement and the sky of the seven stories comprised in the huge towers. The entrance to the staircases in these was barred by two doors, each having a different lock, and the communication between the several stories was cut off by a strong iron grating. The cells also had two doors to each, varying from two to three inches in thickness. Most of the floors of the cells were also double,

the space between being carefully filled up, to prevent communication with the prisoners above or below. At the slightest appearance of a crack in the ceiling, the plaster was renewed, and once every week it was the custom to make a careful examination of the cells, in which both sight and sound were exercised with the utmost circumspection. The furniture of these cells, though limited to bare necessity, was sufficient; it consisted of a bed with paillasse and mattress, one or two tables, a like number of chairs, a candlestick, a jug, a fork, a spoon, and a pewter mug. To guard the fortress in which these few prisoners were confined, there was a garrison of about eighty veteran soldiers, which was strengthened in times of trouble.

As regards the supply of food to the prisoners who were not immured in the dungeons, it was abundant; on this head, we have the testimony of Queen Anne of Austria's chamberlain, in addition to other sources of information. Nor were the prisoners prevented from meeting and conversing in the courtyard, so that the garrulous old veteran, Marshal Bassompierre, who, according to his own account, had been a great favourite among the ladies in his time, had the opportunity of continuing to try his fascinating powers on a young lady who was also a prisoner. To be more precise as to the quantity of food allowed to prisoners, we may quote the evidence of Constantin de Renneville, who says they had three meals a day, and at each of these meals several dishes. At dinner, they had an allowance of two bottles of wine, either burgundy or champagne, with an extra allowance on certain days observed as festivals; in short, so liberal was the diet that some of the prisoners, like the Englishman under similar circumstances, proposed to take a part of it in money, and to share it with the governor; a proposition which, if it had been acceded to, would not have been to the taste of the jailers, who were able to feast abundantly on the portions left in the dishes as they carried them down-stairs, and whose slow steps were a subject of jesting to the men they assisted in guarding.

Under the eyes of the guards, prisoners were allowed, during the hours they spent in the courts, to make up little parties at cards, ninepins, chess, billiards, and other games; to join in music and singing; to keep animals of various kinds, birds (not excepting pigeons), until it was discovered that they were used as go-betweens from those within to their friends without the walls. These indulgences, however, which were so freely accorded through a long period after it had ceased to be regarded in any other light than as a prison, were one by one withdrawn, until at last the keeping of any living creature became an illicit indulgence, and the only source of amusement that was never withdrawn was the supply of books from the library. The permission to commit their thoughts to writing was only obtained with difficulty, and the sheets of paper with which they were furnished were carefully numbered and initialed by the king's lieutenant. No opposition was ever made to the free performance of what they regarded as their religious duties.

Nor were the prisoners, at one time, entirely cut off from the sight of the world outside the walls. It is on record that they were allowed to see from the tops of the towers the people passing below, and could therefore exchange signs of friendly

greeting; but as to communications between them that was impossible; the jailers were incorruptible; and so ignorant were the prisoners of what passed in the world, that when the overthrow of the Bastille took place, one of those liberated asked if Louis XV. was still alive.

THE LUUR.

I was travelling late one summer evening through one of the most lonely and picturesque valleys of the western coast of Norway. It was impassable for all save the sure-footed mountain-pony of that country, so that I preferred often to trudge a few miles on foot, my luggage, rods, &c. being strapped on the pony's back. It was one of those delicious evenings that are to be found, I think, only in northern latitudes; for, though it was close on midnight, the sun still shone on the tops of the mountains that hemmed in either side of the narrow valley; while below was quite light enough to read the smallest print with ease. My guide and pony were about a couple of hundred yards in front of me, for I loitered behind every now and then to admire the grandeur of the scene, or to watch the ever-shifting light on a distant glacier, which looked more like a sea of opal than anything else to which I can compare it. Indeed, every yard I advanced, there was something fresh to wonder at. Now it was a torrent falling perpendicularly downward from the heights above, and losing itself long ere it reached the bottom in masses of feathery spray, affording a wondrous display of aquatic fireworks; now it was a grand waterfall, leaping and dashing down the feld side in impetuous haste to reach the river, that fretted and chafed along like an angry serpent at the bottom of the valley. And yet, with all the din and noise of the roaring flood, there was a deathly, oppressive stillness. Not a breath of wind stirred, not a sound of animal life was heard, save here and there the tinkling of a distant cow-bell, the whirring of a goatsucker on the wing, or the splash of a salmon in the river below.

All at once, however, I was startled by hearing a loud though melodious sound far above my head among the rocks. It reminded me more of the Alpine horn than anything I had ever heard.

'What is that?' I inquired as I hastened on to catch up my guide.

'It is a *luur*!' was the reply. A *luur*, I must inform my readers, is a long horn made of birchen bark, which the peasants use to collect their cattle. It struck me at the time as being strange for people to be out at that time of night so late with their cattle; but my attention was soon diverted to other objects, and I daresay I dismissed the strangeness of the incident from my thoughts with the reflection that nothing could in truth be strange in a country where day and night were one.

Before long, I arrived at the farmhouse where I was expected, and where I intended staying a few weeks salmon-fishing. Late though it was, my host was waiting to receive me. He was a middle-aged man, with long flaxen hair flowing down to his shoulders, and was dressed in full national costume. He greeted me in true Norwegian style, and after expressing his fears that I must be weary, led the way into the house, where an ample supper was laid out for me. I had an introduction to him from a friend of his in Christiania, who promised

me some excellent fishing, if I would consent to put up with a rough life for a few weeks.

Ingebræt—such was the name in which my host rejoiced—was a tall broad-built man. His features were finely chiselled; in fact, he was a person who could not fail to attract attention wherever he might be. He was a widower, but his only daughter, Ingeleiv, lived at home with him, and managed his domestic affairs for him. These two, with some half-dozen farm-servants and their families, who lived in huts close by the farm-house, formed the whole population to be found for a distance of several miles. Ingeleiv was a true specimen of a Norwegian mountain beauty: tall in figure like her father, with the same auburn hair, and blue melting eyes, she presented a picture that an artist would have loved to paint.

'Twas beauty truly blent, whose red and white
Nature's own sweet and cunning hand laid on.

There was a something, too, about her that attracted my attention; perhaps it was her bearing, approaching almost to stateliness, that struck me. At all events, she seemed immeasurably superior to what a Norwegian farmer's daughter usually is.

But before retiring to bed, my host informed me, to my surprise, that he was a lineal descendant of the great Harald Haarfager ('Fair-haired'). His family, he said with an air of conscious dignity, had never mingled with any who were not of royal blood. He was the last of his race, and before he died, he hoped to see his daughter married to a cousin of his, who lived I forget where.

How strange it all seemed to me! There, amid the fastnesses of the mountains, to meet with a man who could trace his descent from kings whose names have left a stamp on the page of history. Turning these things over and over in my mind, I soon fell into a peaceful slumber. How long I slept I know not, but I was awakened by hearing the same plaintive sound of the lur on the mountain side opposite. I sprang out of bed, and throwing the window open, distinctly heard a voice calling or rather singing in a melodious key: 'How is —?' And here followed a word I could not catch; and then another voice at a long distance off took up the strain, and made some reply in the same harmonious key. I listened to hear it repeated, but all was still; so again seeking my couch, I resumed my dream about monstrous salmon and countless herds of reindeer.

Next morning, I was soon down; and as Ingeleiv was laying out breakfast for me in the large kitchen, her father came in from seeing after his farm, and made earnest and polite inquiries about the way in which I had passed the night.

'Famously!' I answered; 'but some of your people were early astir, for I could hear two voices on yonder mountains as if after the cows;' and putting my hands to my mouth I imitated as well as I could the sound I had heard.

'Strange!' he answered, 'for I have no cattle on the mountain this summer.—Did you hear it, Inga?' turning to his daughter.

But Inga's averted face, which was the colour of scarlet, plainly shewed me that she did know something more about it than her father knew. So thinking it might be a lover, and that they were obliged to adopt this method of courting, or of 'luring' each other, I quickly turned the subject

and spoke of other things. From that day, however, Ingeleiv avoided me, and thus deprived me of any opportunity of finding out the mystery of the lur.

I will not fatigue my reader by dwelling on the sport I had with the salmon, nor yet on the excursions I made after reindeer in company with my host, who was a clever hunter and capital shot; suffice it to say, I thoroughly enjoyed myself. But, alas! it was time for me to think of leaving; and I was the more sorry, because I could see that Inga was evidently unhappy, and wore about her pretty and formerly cheerful face an air which betokened great mental suffering.

It was late in the evening when I bade my kind friends adieu, for I wished again to traverse that mountain valley by night. My *skjots-boy* (they call them all boys in Norway, whether they be old men, or even of the opposite gender), or post-boy, was an intelligent youth of two or three and twenty years. We soon became great friends, and in less than half an hour he had communicated the history of his life to me. 'He had been educated as a schoolmaster,' he said, 'but was now only a labouring servant on an adjacent farm.'

'Everybody seems to fall instead of rise in these parts,' I thought to myself, when he had concluded his tale. Our road lay up a steep rocky path. Carl—such was the lad's name—was leading the pony in front by the bridle, while I as usual was sauntering behind to catch a last long look of the lovely scene, when again I was aroused from my reverie by seeing him place his hands to his mouth, and directing his voice towards the mountains, send forth a plaintive sound. In a few seconds I heard it thrown back from the rocks, and should doubtless have thought it was but the echo, had not the waving of a woman's garment two hundred feet above my head attracted my eye.

'I will find out this mystery before I go,' I said aloud, for, indeed, so engrossed had I been with fishing and shooting, that it had quite escaped my memory. 'Carl,' I said, 'what is that?'

He seemed quite taken aback at the suddenness of the question, but laughed it off by saying he was only calling for amusement.

'But I tell you, some one answered you up yonder; and see, she is waving her hand towards us. I will go and see; do you wait below.'

And in a few moments I had clambered up the hillside to where I had fancied I had seen the woman standing. She was no longer visible; but I observed a low hut built of leafy boughs, a few paces off, nearly hidden behind a rocky ledge.

Carl now caught me up, and tried to dissuade me from entering; but the despair depicted on his face only made me the more resolved to carry out my determination, so, pushing him back, I opened the door and entered the hut.

A strange sight met my eye. On the middle of the floor was a little cradle, in which a rosy-cheeked baby lay sleeping, while kneeling down by its side, as if keeping guard over her child's slumber, was its mother. She raised her head on my approach, and I saw, to my astonishment, that it was none other than the pretty daughter of my host. 'Ingeleiv!' I said, 'you here!' as the whole mystery now lay open before me.

'Oh, tell him, Carl!' she answered, bowing her head down, as if afraid to look me in the face—'tell him! I know he is a kind man, and may help us!'

Thus solicited, Carl narrated to me the following touching tale.

They had been brought up together, he said, from childhood, and what wonder if they became all in all to each other. He knew he was not worthy of her, and that Ingebræt would never give his daughter to him—a common farming-man. But he would make himself worthy of her; and so he studied hard at his books, and with the help of the good pastor, had hoped to be able to take a post as schoolmaster (an office held in great respect among the peasantry). But it was all in vain; he had no royal blood in his veins; and neither prayers nor entreaties could move the stern old man from his purpose of wedding his daughter to one of the same family with herself. 'Then,' said Carl, 'I was miserable, and thought I had better leave the world as quickly as I could, for there was nothing in it worth living for now. But she came to me, just as I was about to'—and his voice failed as he came to this part of his story, 'and promised to share weal or woe with me, and in a weak moment I consented. And now—now—she is made as wretched as myself; and I—I alone am her destroyer.'

Words would fail me were I to attempt to describe the scene that followed the conclusion of his simple but touching tale; indeed, I was so moved myself at the distress of the two young people, that it is best to draw a veil over it.

'But where has the child been all this while?' I inquired.

'Here, sir!' answered Carl. 'I built this hut, and Ingeleiv and I take it in turns as we can to be with it.'

'And how far is this from your father's house?' I inquired of Ingeleiv.

'About three miles; but Carl has twice that distance to go; and the tears rolled fast down her cheek.'

'You see, sir,' added Carl, 'as yet during the summer we have been able to manage; but now that the days are becoming shorter and shorter, and winter is coming on, God above only knows what will be the end of it.' And here Carl followed Ingeleiv's example, and cried like a child.

'Well, cheer up, my friends; I'll do what I can to help you; but you must agree to act according to my directions. Let us wait till to-morrow, however; it is too late to think of doing anything at this late hour.' So spreading my rug down on the ground, and making a pillow of my knapsack, and lighting that unfailing source of consolation, a good cigar, I lay down and smoked, thought over the best plan to be adopted to make things smooth, and then fell asleep.

Next morning, we all set out for Ingeleiv's house. I need not say how surprised my old friend was to see me return so quickly.

'What! you couldn't leave the salmon then?' he said.

Meanwhile, Carl had taken the child, and loitered a little behind on the road, while Ingeleiv slipped into the house unobserved.

'Yes,' I said, entering the house; and then after a few commonplace remarks, I led the conversation to a topic on which the old man never wearied of hearing himself or others talk—namely, the old kings of Norway. But I was determined not to humour him to his full bent this time; for when he got on his favourite hobbyhorse, it was

difficult to stop him; so I turned the conversation to hard-hearted parents and ill-assorted marriages, and told him about Philip of Spain, D'Aguesseau, and others; and then, when I saw I had made some impression—for the old man received any historical fact, especially when it related to the great of the earth, with implicit confidence—and had excited his curiosity, I concocted a little history exactly similar in all respects to that of Ingeleiv and Carl; and when I had concluded, I took down two books from the book-shelf, which gave evident signs of having been well studied.

'Here, Ingebræt,' I said, taking up one—it was his favourite book—the *History of the Kings of Norway*—'here is a book which tells you all about the lives and deaths of royalty; but here is a book' (it was the Bible) 'which teaches us that in God's sight, who is King of all kings, we all are equal. Humility, forgiveness, and love are the lessons it teaches us.' And then running out of the room, and fetching back the infant in a trice, I laid it in his arms, saying: 'And there is your daughter's child, Ingebræt, and it prays through me that you will not repulse your own blood from you; remember, too, that the blood of old Harald Haarfager is flowing in its veins.'

It was a strange way of breaking news, dear reader, you may perhaps say; and you are quite right. But still I think it was the most effective way I could have adopted. That last touch about the child being of royal descent was, I have ever since thought, the most masterly and diplomatic thing I ever did in my life. A death-like paleness came over the old man's face. I felt it was a critical moment, and I did not keep silence. Never, I am sure, did I talk so fast, beg, pray, or entreat so hard as I did then. At last he began to relent; for at first he was all for driving his daughter out from home and hearth. Not that he would have done it, I am sure, for he loved her dearly. But by degrees, when the first shock was over, and when Inga had thrown herself down on the floor, and had embraced his knees, begging for mercy for herself and helpless babe, the rigid muscles of his face began to quiver, and he burst into tears.

'Nothing like a good cry,' I thought to myself, as I hurried out to fetch in Carl; 'it does man and woman good when practised in moderation.'

Carl was not slow to follow Inga's example; and at last, when I fairly saw the baby still in the old man's arms, while Inga and Carl were at his feet, I thought the tableau did not require the addition of myself, so I retreated and had a pipe over it. How fragrant that pipe of tobacco tasted! for had I not made peace—had I not brought joy to two sorrowing hearts!

Going away next day, or the next, or the next to that, was quite out of the question. I was obliged to complete what I had begun; so I spent my time till the wedding-day, fishing and shooting, and otherwise amusing myself, happy in the consciousness that I had at last really done a good thing in my life.

I was Carl's best man! What a wedding-dinner we had!—and what speeches! Of course my health was drunk; and if only Carl had not dwelt too much on my extraordinary virtues, I should have said he had made a most *apropos* speech for a bridegroom.

I often go to see my old Norwegian friends and to fish. The old man has gone to his fathers; but

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Carl and Inga, and a whole tribe of olive-branches, look for my coming regularly when the salmon begin to run up the river.

FROM THE 'WILD COAST'

In a corner at the north-east of South America, lies a territory full of interest, fabulous, romantic, historical, and actual—a small territory in comparison with the immense tracts which lie above, beneath, and to the westward of it; but richer in mysterious conjecture, in association, and in record of human endeavour, than perhaps any of them. Most curious in the diversities of the race of man, in the ethnological problems it offers, which are apparently hopeless of solution, and in the marvellous revelations of superstition which have been made to travellers who have examined into the condition of its Indian tribes.* This territory is the province of Guiana, divided into British, Dutch, and French possessions—'the mighty, rich, and beautiful empire of Guiana' of Sir Walter Raleigh, 'the Wild Coast' of the Dutch explorers; the land longed for, dreamed of, sought as El Dorado. All that was most beautiful and desirable was to be won in that distant land, at the price of encountering all that was most terrible and revolting. The fabled subterranean kingdom of the *Arabian Nights*, where the treasures of gold and of jewels, of light, wisdom, and immortality, were guarded by dread creatures of preternatural strength and subtlety, found a real counterpart in the country of the Wild Coast, where the great savannahs were the home of monsters, awful to look upon, of great strength and ferocity, who ate human flesh. The beautiful, fanciful fable of the empire of Guiana and its founders the Incas, vanished before the Dutch occupation; but the three centuries and a half which have elapsed since Vasco Nunez discovered it, have not sufficed to reveal the story of its savage inhabitants, the original 'noble savage'—the famous Carib, of continental and island celebrity. Since the time of Sir Walter Raleigh, whose fiction so far outweighed his facts that small reliance can be placed upon his statements, the chief exponents of this wonderful region have been Schomburgk and Humboldt, who differed in their interpretation of those curious remains of antiquity, the sculptures on the rocks in the interior of Guiana, which closely resemble those existing in the islands. However it is to be interpreted, or whether it will ever be, the fact exists, that many inland tribes of the southern continent speak the island languages, while the tribes who occupy the coast, and who would naturally be supposed to have been reached by the islanders, do not. Mr Brett suggests that 'the island Caribs have been an offshoot from a common parent stock, once settled in Guiana, but long since broken up—the same perhaps which carved the sculptures on the rocks

in the interior, which hieroglyphics the Caribs, in their migrations, would naturally imitate.'

Of all savage tribes, the Caribs have been the most interesting to speculate about, from the time when, in their discovery, and in the ascertaining of their being cannibals, the Elizabethan people believed they had found the interpretation of the classical legends of the Cyclops, to our own days, when the ingenious Mr Barham suggested, as disposing of personages no longer required, that

Some got shot, and some got drowned, and some,
beyond the seas
Got scraped to death with oyster-shells, among the
Caribbees—

a consummation which recurs forcibly to the memory when one reads Mr Brett's account of the finding of several tumuli far inland, composed of quantities of shells, and human bones, broken in pieces, evidently that the marrow might be conveniently eaten out of them. It is only just to the modern Carib to state, that though still a savage of a low and ferocious type, he is not a cannibal, and he dislikes being convinced of the cannibalism of his ancestors, always endeavouring to make out that it must have been some other tribe who ate the Caribs, even though that theory implies the admission of conquest. It is very pleasant to read about British Guiana, to know that if it does not keep pace with the Dutch settlement, it is at least much more prosperous and important than the French, to which the ugly and opprobrious association of a penal settlement attaches; and the list of natural products is important. It is also pleasant to learn with what patience and perseverance missionary enterprise is being pushed forward in the British territory, whose coast-line is two hundred miles in length, and which extends far into the interior, to the border of Brazil. The success of the missionaries in introducing Christianity does not seem to be very brilliant, but they have introduced clothes, some faint notion of morals, and a few kinds of industry, which sensible people will regard as the best and most promising beginning. Before Mr Brett takes his readers into the interior, among the Caribs, he describes Georgetown, the capital, on the Demerara, and gives them a glimpse of a society, than which there can hardly be any in the world more strangely constituted. In the streets, with canals on either side, and with gardens around the houses, shaded by the cocoa-nut and the cabbage-palm, may be seen busy groups, composed of the native Americans, of Europeans of all countries, but the Portuguese most numerous, of coolies from Calcutta and Madras, and Chinese from the far, far East. There they are, in their various costumes, speaking their different tongues, moving about among the bulk of the population, which is of course Creole. A babel of tongues, even without the addition of the languages of the aborigines; a confusion of nations, the worst practices of heathenism, the prevalence of the Hindu and Mohammedan creeds, together with the eastern

* *The Indian Tribes of Guiana, their Condition and Habits, with Researches into their past History, Superstitions, Legends, Antiquities, Languages, &c.* By the Rev. W. H. Brett. London: Bell and Daldy.

costumes, give the whole place an oriental character, and makes the field of missionary labour as difficult as it is expansive. But we see all this elsewhere, if less strikingly; the aborigines are what we do not see, and what we want to see; and the way to them, in their wild haunts in the interior, lies through a country which might indeed well inspire the poetic fancy, the gorgeous visions, and the illusive hopes of the dreamers of El Dorado.

The way lies through splendid forests, which commence at the edge of the sea, and stretching across the plains, climb the sides of the rocky mountains of the interior. Magnificent timber-trees—the green-heart and the purple-heart, the stately mora, the locust-tree—rear their grand heads above the smaller kinds, beneath which, again, from a moist carpet of fallen leaves, moss, and fungi, springs humbler vegetation in rank luxuriance. Palms of numerous kinds lend their special beauty to these forests, and beautiful parasites abound in them. As for the animal life, Mr Brett says: 'He who would see the beasts and birds must arise from his hammock with the dawn, and go with the Indian, through the bush dripping with dew. The jaguar, having completed his nightly prow, is retiring to his lair; the red howling monkey is uttering less terrible cries, beginning to tire of his own noise; the birds and smaller animals are coming forth to feed; and everything teems with life. High overhead, green parrots of various species, numerous and noisy as rooks, are flying to their feeding-places. Macaws, blue and yellow, or blue and crimson, occasionally shew themselves; and in the higher regions is seen the magnificent ara, with plumage of brilliant scarlet, set off with tints of purple and gold. The toucan displays his gorgeous red and yellow bosom, and tosses his enormous beak with fantastic jerks on the top of the highest tree. The hannaqua and duragua, the marudi and the maam; the stately crested powis, with jet black feathers and yellow beak, and many others may be seen. Least in size, but not in beauty, are the various species of humming-birds, flitting hither and thither like bees, and flashing in the sun like jewels. Insects, beautiful or otherwise, creeping and flying, abound; and the couchi and wood-ants swarm, for ever ingeniously busy. But the heat increases, and the birds seek shelter; the intense stillness of the forest sets in, to be dispelled by the evening, when the world of bird and beast bestirs itself again. Then comes night, and new silence, broken by the croaking of frogs, the cry of nocturnal birds, the chirping of insects, and the sound of the vampire and other bats in their nocturnal flight.'

The tapir, the deer, the bush-hog, the labba—which, being delicious food, is mercilessly hunted—the sloth, the opossum, many kinds of monkeys and ant-eaters, the armadillo, and the coati-mondi, abound in the forests; while in the deepest glades there is always the possibility of meeting the ocelot, the puma, and beautiful spotted jaguar, and even the black variety, the rarest and most feared of all, the animal which has not only real

but superstitious terror for the Indian, in whose legends it plays the part of the wehr-wolf of Germany, the loup-garou of France. 'Although,' says Mr Brett, 'the spotted jaguar is a beast of prey, it is impossible to gaze without admiration on his rich glossy skin, as the sunbeams fall on it through the opening in the tall trees caused by the stream. He will not, however, allow you much time for observing the black spots, disposed in rings or rosettes on his tawny hide, as he generally retreats after gazing for a few seconds at the intruding party, often looking round, as he glides off with noiseless step, and bounds carelessly, and without the least apparent effort, over the fallen trees which may lie in his path.' Through these beautiful forests, by mighty rivers, of which the Essequibo is the largest, with their numerous tributaries, and their rushing cataracts and rapids, the traveller journeys in quest of the traditional Caribs, along the shores of lakes which abound in fine fish, but likewise in alligators, and otters so daring that they will follow his canoe, and bite at the steering paddle.

There are no roads through the forest save the foot-track of the Indian; to reach the aborigines, at home in the woodlands, to whom the visitor seems an awkward, bungling, helpless creature, one must ascend the rivers. The Caribs are found at the upper part of the Pomeroon, where they occupy a large tract of rich and beautiful country. The women of this traditionally interesting tribe are exceedingly ugly, and barbarous in appearance. Mr Brett thus describes the first group of them he saw. 'Their dress was merely a narrow strip of blue cloth, and their naked bodies were smeared with the red arnotto, which gave them the appearance of bleeding at every pore. As if this were not sufficiently ornamental, some of them had endeavoured to improve its appearance by blue spots upon their bodies and limbs. They wore round each leg, just below the knee, a tight strap of cotton, painted red, and another above each ankle. These are fastened on while the girl is young, and hinder growth by compression, while the calf, which is unconfined, appears, in consequence, unnaturally large. But the most singular part of their appearance is presented by the lower lip, which they perforate, and wear one, two, or three pins sticking through the hole, with the points outward. Before they procured pins, thorns were worn.' The men, though they also smear their bodies with the arnotto, are not so hideous as the women, and they are certainly a brave and sensible race, skilful and indefatigable hunters, and capable of hard work, which few Indian tribes are. They are of an imaginative and enthusiastic temperament, as was abundantly proved by the readiness with which they fell victims to a remarkable imposture. A person, pretending to be the Deity, went into the interior with several followers, and established himself in the upper part of the Masaruni. From this distant spot he sent emissaries into the neighbourhood of all the missions, calling on the Indians to quit their homes and provision-grounds, and go with him. They were told that they should possess lands which would yield a large crop of cassava from a single stick, and various other absurdities, very alluring to the Indian. These tales, joined to threats of horrible destruction which should come upon all who refused to go, had their influence upon the minds of many, and lured them away,

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several to perish by sickness on the journey, and others to find themselves in a state of destitution on arriving. The Caribs possess strong family and tribal feeling, and though they emulate the external impassiveness which is so highly prized a characteristic of the savage, Mr Brett does not consider them unfeeling or unemotional. The description he gives of the Christian Caribs is eminently satisfactory, and it is evident that the heathens are above their neighbours in intelligence. Of one tribe, the Waraus, he gives a truly deplorable account. They are in the last and lowest category of degraded human nature, and in comparison with the other American tribes, what the Gytch savages are, in comparison with the other tribes of the Nile.

The Caribs suffer much from epidemics, and from several severe and painful forms of skin disease. Like all Indians, they believe sickness to be the result of sorcery, and are at the mercy of their medicine-men. They suffer patiently and haughtily, and it is difficult to induce them to believe in or try any foreign remedies. They have a frightful custom of hereditary revenge, which resembles, in principle, the *vendetta* of Corsica, and in the mode of its carrying out, Thuggee. Slavery and its accompanying vices are thinning their numbers; but it does not appear from Mr Brett's narrative that any of the customary cruelties of European rule have been inflicted upon them by the English, the French, or the Dutch. Their superstitious and social practices are very curious, occasionally suggesting a resemblance to those of the Chinese. Mr Brett has seen a Carib lying in his hammock, and receiving most ludicrous and unpleasant attentions from the women of his tribe, on the occasion of his wife's confinement, while the mother had to exert herself as usual. When the birth of an infant is expected—which, as they are polygamists, is by no means rare—the father must abstain from certain meats, his eating of which would be injurious to the child. The *agouti* is tabooed, lest, like that little animal, the infant should be meagre; the *hamiara* also, lest it should be blind—the outer covering of the eye of that fish being filmy; the *labba*, lest the infant's mouth should protrude like the *labba's*, or be spotted like it, which spots would ultimately become ulcers; the *marudi* is also forbidden, lest the infant be still-born, the screeching of that bird being considered ominous of death. The Indians believe in the immortality of the soul, and in the invisibility of God—in this sense, they are not idolaters—and they have quite exalted notions of the power of God, and some idea of His goodness, in which they are far superior to the African savages. But, like them, they live in perpetual dread of the agency of evil spirits, and in constant striving to avert calamity by propitiating them. The sorcerer's being the most important and honourable profession within the reach of the Indian, it is not unfair that he should be obliged to endure some pain and unpleasantness to qualify him for it.

Mr Brett's account of the initiation is curious. 'When an Indian,' he says, 'has made up his mind to become a sorcerer, he applies to some professor of that art, who takes him into a small hut prepared for that purpose. After certain preliminaries, including solitude and spare diet, a quantity of water, containing about ten leaves of cured tobacco, is boiled down to about a

fourth. This horribly nauseous and emetic dose he must swallow: and in the death-like state of sickness to which it reduces him, his spirit is supposed to leave the body, and to visit and receive power from the Yauhahu, as the dreaded beings are called, under whose influence he is supposed to remain ever after. Meanwhile, his death is loudly proclaimed, and his countrymen are called to witness his state. Recovery is slow; and the tenth day he comes forth from the sacred hut in an emaciated condition. For ten months after, the new sorcerer must abstain from the flesh of birds and beasts, and only the smallest kinds of fish are allowed him. Even cassava-bread is to be eaten sparingly, and intoxicated drinks avoided during that period. Meats and food not indigenous to the country are especially tabooed. I have known one of these men refuse to pick up some North American salt-fish which had fallen on the ground, lest by touching it he should neutralise the power of his enchantments. The sorcerers are furnished with a large gourd or calabash, which has been emptied of its seeds and spongy contents, and has a round stick run through the middle of it by means of two holes. The ends of this stick project—one forms the handle of the instrument, and the other has a long string, to which beautiful feathers are attached, wound round it in spiral circles. Within the calabash are a few small white stones, which rattle when it is shaken or turned round. The calabash itself is usually painted red. It is regarded with great awe by the heathen Indians, who fear to touch it, or even to approach the place where it is kept. Wonderful as such degradation seems to us, in the people who believe in these sorcerers, the apparent belief of the sorcerers in themselves is still more wonderful; but this Mr Brett does not doubt—they perform all their juggleries over their own children, and have all the incantations gone through over themselves when they are sick.

The Waraus, most degraded of tribes, are the most renowned as sorcerers. The huts which they set apart for the performance of their rites are regarded with great veneration. A traveller, visiting a Warau settlement, entered one of those huts, not being aware of the offence he was committing, and found it perfectly empty, with the exception of the gourd. There was in the centre of the hut a small raised place about eighteen inches high, on which a fire had been made for burning tobacco. The sorcerer being asked to give up the gourd, peremptorily refused, saying that if he did so, his two children would die the same night. The most imaginative of their superstitions is that concerning the Orchu, an important person in Indian mythology. She is a mysterious female inhabiting the waters, not so malignant as the Yauhahu, but very capricious, and much dreaded. Her form is that of a mermaid—according to the European fancy; but she sometimes assumes the head of a horse, or of some other animal. She often amuses herself by merely terrifying mankind; but sometimes bears both canoe and people to the bottom. The Indian belief in this creature is shared by the immigrant negro tribes, who call her the 'water mamma.' In their mythology and legendary tales, one Sign figures largely—a colossal hero, whose doings are not altogether unworthy of admiration. 'Unlike the aborigines of Hayti,' says Mr Brett, 'whose patriotic vanity led them to believe that their

island was the first of all things, and that the sun and moon issued from one of its caverns, and men from another; the tribes of Guiana acknowledge the immediate work of a Creator. Among those near the coast, the belief formerly prevailing was, that 'the Great Spirit, having created the heavens and the earth, seated Himself on a huge silk-cotton tree by a river-side, and cut off pieces of its bark or wood, which he cast all around. Those which touched the water became fishes; others flew in the air as birds; while some, as animals of various kinds, and lastly, man, moved on the earth.' To this very ancient legend, additions have been made during the last three centuries. According to one of these, the white race sprung from the branch of a certain tree, which the Great Maker cast upon the water. 'There is in this a little quiet satire, as the tree from which the branch was taken is of little or no value.' These and the many strange, and in some instances poetical, fancies narrated by Mr Brett, still flourish in the far interior, and in the swampy regions stretching towards the Orinoco, and are carefully transmitted by these remote people, who have no other lore. They are, however, rapidly dying out among the Indians who are brought in contact with civilisation. Such of the Carib women as have embraced Christianity have taken to wearing clothes with much readiness, and seemed at first to think they never could wear enough; while the men developed a tendency to wearing shirts—keeping the soiled one under the clean—and very brilliant flowered waistcoats. As they did not adopt any other portion of the garb of civilisation, the effect was more peculiar than pleasing.

On the whole, Mr Brett makes one rather like the Indians of Guiana; but he does not clear up the mystery of their early history; nor does he think it ever can be cleared up. The discoveries made by himself and others indicate unmistakably that great changes, without any traceable influence having been brought to bear upon the frightfully barbarous tribes of the interior, must have taken place. Cannibalism, for instance, which was indubitably a universal custom, no longer exists, and the Indians, as we have said, are ashamed and distressed at its discovery. The most archaic forms of weapons have been replaced by graceful and efficient ones of native invention and manufacture. Are these things evidences of an inherent law of progress and development? or were they suggested by invasion, by intermixture of race, of which there is no record, written or graven? A dense cloud hangs over the origin of these tribes of Guiana. Mr Brett thus summarises their history, as far as it is known: 'In the sixteenth century they appear before us; the Caribs and fiercer tribes attacking, and the others fleeing, or defending themselves as well as they are able; while the practice of enslaving each other seems to have generally prevailed. In the course of the next century, we see them chiefly engaged in resisting the encroachments of a fairer and stronger race, which arrived from various countries of Europe with more destructive weapons. In the eighteenth century, while still enslaving each other, we find them frequently engaged by the side of the white man in deadly contest with the black.'

The middle of the nineteenth century beheld these various conflicting races united in peace. Judging from the rapid decline of their numbers, and the continued prevalence of the causes of that

decline, it does not seem unlikely that there will be no Caribs by the middle of the twentieth century. Apart from the consideration that the people of that time will not have the chance of reading so pleasant and interesting a book as Mr Brett's, perhaps the extinction of the traditionally unconquerable aborigines of Guiana will not be to be deplored.

THE PROBLEM.

HER life is all one neutral tint;
A cold and quiet gray;
No thunder-cloud nor sunbeam glint
Darkens or cheers her way;
No great events their shadows cast
Across her Present or her Past.

From year to year she patient sips
The tasteless cup of life;
No annals e'en escape her lips
Of blighting care or strife;
And rarely from them falls one word
That would be worthy to record.

She is not old—she is not young—
She works from day to day,
Nor cares for those she dwells among,
And hers—the neighbours say—
A nature neither warm nor cold,
Too soft to carve—too hard to mould.

And yet her face has saddening power,
I seek the cause in vain—
As sometimes, at the twilight hour,
A misty, treeless plain,
With drearier feelings fills the heart,
Than scenes of strife or storm impart.

Kingdoms might fall, and empires quake,
Nations rejoice and groan,
And in her breast no interest wake,
Yet surely I have known
A sound, a scent, a trifling thing,
Search out some memory's hidden spring;

When, slowly rising to her eye,
I see a faint light glow,
And then—I know not how or why—
It must be long ago—
By that pale gleam I read the cost
Of a life's welfare staked and lost!

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